

# RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

COME NOW, AND LET US REASON TOGETHER.—ISAIAH 1. 18.

EDITED BY REV. R. CARRIQUE.—PUBLISHED BY AN ASSOCIATION OF GENTLEMEN.

VOL. II.]

HARTFORD, (CONN.) JANUARY 25, 1823.

[NO. 6.

## MINUTES

### OF THE NORTHERN OHIO ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSALISTS.

The Northern Association of Universalists, met according to adjournment of last year, at the school-house in Shalersville, Portage county, Ohio, on Tuesday evening, Sept. 3d, 1822.—Opened the business of the session by singing an hymn, and fervent and devout prayer by brother Timothy Bigelow.

Proceeded to organize the Association :

1. Chose br. T. Bigelow moderator.
2. Made choice of brothers N. B. Johnson and E. Williams Clerks.
3. Voted br. N. B. Johnson standing committee to grant letters of fellowship for the Richland, Ohio, Association; and br. Daniel Demick standing clerk for the same; it being neglected at the session of said association, holden last week.

4. Appointed brothers T. Bigelow, E. Williams, T. Cotton, N. B. Johnson, and T. Strong, a committee to examine candidates for the ministry.

5. Voted to adjourn to 7 o'clock to-morrow morning: prayer and giving of thanks by br. E. Williams.

Wednesday morning, 7 o'clock, met at convention hall, agreeably to adjournment; sang an hymn, and prayer by br. T. Strong:—proceeded to business.

6. Proceeded to examine the letters from the several churches and societies, composing this association; and to the reports of our bretheren from different parts, which is as refreshing as the showers of May. We find the number of members in our churches and societies, much increased.

7. Received into fellowship the society of Aurora; also the society of Newton and Braceville, and the church and society of Austintown.

8. Received a request from Medina county, through br. Lathrop Seymour, for assistance in the ministry.

9. Received a request, through br. J. T. Baldwin, from fort Meigs, and the river Raisin, for labourers in the ministry of reconciliation.

10. Voted that clerks of all the churches and societies bring forward their records, relative to the churches and societies, at the next annual association.

11. Received forty-three representatives in addition to the number of last year: John Herrington, of Hiram, Portage county, is not received as a member.

12. Order of public service on Wednesday morning: Introductory prayer by br. T. Bigelow; sermon by brother T. Cotton,—text, St. Mark, 16th chapter, 15th and 16th verses; concluding prayer by br. E. Williams.

13. Order of public services for the afternoon: Introductory prayer by br. E. Williams; sermon by br. N. B. Johnson; text 2d Peter, 2d chapter, 1, 2, and 3d verses; after which, brothers Benjamin Baldwin, Horace Burroughs, and John M. Baldwin, were ordained as deacons, in the several churches to which they belong: concluding and consecrating prayer by br. T. Bigelow; charge by brother R. Jones.

14. Order of evening service: Introductory prayer by br. A. Perkins; Sermon by br. T. Strong,—text, Isaiah, chap. 53, verse 11; concluding prayer by br. T. Cotton. Voted to adjourn until 7 o'clock, to-morrow morning.

15. Thursday morning, 7 o'clock, met at council hall; sang an hymn, and prayer by br. D. St. Clair.

16. Received the society of Farmingtown into fellowship.

17. Received br. John Boyer into the fellowship of this Association. Br. Boyer has been, for a number of years, a minister of the christian order, but at length has found his way through the fog; and is not the first to have been so highly favoured.

18. The committee to examine candidates for letters of fellowship, reported in favor of granting letters to brothers Ambrose Perkins, David St. Clair, John Tuttle, and John M. Baldwin, as ministers of the gospel; which report is accepted.

19. The committee for the examining of candidates for ordination, reported in favor of ordaining br. Theophilus Cotton; which report is accepted.

20. Appointed brothers T. Bigelow, E. Williams, and T. Cotton, standing committee.

21. Voted br. J. T. Baldwin standing clerk.

22. Appointed br. T. Bigelow treasurer.

23. Order of public service Thursday morning: Introductory prayer by brother T. Bigelow; first sermon by br. E. Williams—text, Gal. 4th chapter, 1, 2, 3, 4. and 5th verses. Second sermon by br. R. Jones—text, St. John, 9th chapter, 7th verse; concluding prayer by br. T. Strong.

24. Order of the afternoon: Introductory prayer by br. E. Williams; sermon by br. N. B. Johnson—text, St. Math. 24th chapter, 14th verse; consecrating prayer by br. T. Bigelow, right hand of fellowship by br. N. B. Johnson; charge and delivery of the scriptures by br. T. Bigelow, and usual addresses to the universalist society and to the congregation, by br. T. Bigelow.

25. Returned in regular procession to council hall, and adjourned the association, to meet again at Painsville, Geauga county, Ohio, on the Wednesday and Thursday preceding the last Wednesday of August next. Sang an hymn; prayer and giving of thanks to our Heavenly Father by br. E. Williams.

TIMOTHY BIGELOW, Moderator.

Attest, E. WILLIAMS, } Clerks.  
N. B. JOHNSON, }

The Northern Association of Universalists, united in friendship divine, to the many brethren and friends, dispersed thro' this once howling wilderness, but now blossoming like the rose: this, truly, is the case in a spiritual sense. The stubborn growth of the intellectual wilds, is rapidly disappearing, through the incessant efforts of God's commissioned labourers, being furnished by Him with every implement of gospel husbandry; and the fragrant blossoms of the tree of life, are unfolding their beauties, to the rising sun of righteousness, portending immortal fruit.

Dearly beloved brethren:—

In communicating to you the occurrences of this important occasion, we state, that we enjoyed much happiness, while performing the pleasing duties of this association. Happy, indeed, while realizing what has actually taken place in the great cause of the emancipation of the world, from ecclesiastical tyranny and oppression; and the anticipation of the approaching glories bursting upon the world. With a retrospective view, let us for a moment turn our attention to the important period, when God through a solitary individual,\* introduced to the Columbian shores, the joyful tidings of God's impartial and unbounded

love; that the blessed Saviour, when He entered the most holy place, bore on the breast-plate of His heart, a remembrance of every individual of his inheritance. The day-spring from on high, then first visited the new world, and planted therein those heavenly ethicks, which alone will yet secure true liberty, both ecclesiastical and political, from the hands of kings and priests; and the echo, bounding from our elevated shores, will be heard in the old world with joy: nations shall come to her light and kings to the brightness of her rising. Let our feelings be awakened when considering the struggles and persecutions that awaited him, and other undaunted heralds of life and immortality; and also that blessed day, when the bright light, travelling in the greatness of its strength, stemming the torrent of all combined opposition, found their way into these western climes, & planted their tabernacle between the seas. Those above named are not the only labourers who have toiled in the heat and burden of the day in the Lord's vineyard, but truly, others there are among us, who are yet stationed on the frontier line of the rapidly increasing dominion of Prince Emmanuel, constantly exposed to the assaults of the combined forces of the common enemy. Every thing is an enemy, that derogates from the character of God, veiling His glories, bounding His goodness, and destroying His heritage.

The heritage of God is the soul of every individual of the Adamick family; for, said He, "All souls are mine," &c. Ezek. xviii. 4. "Ask of me, and I shall give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost part of the earth for thy possession." Ps. ii. 8. These labourers, who are contending for the boundless nature of the love of God, and the extensiveness of the inheritance of Jesus; pressing forward amidst the volleys of Clerical anathema, spirited volleys, and thunders from Sinai, strengthened by the Almighty, have finally succeeded in planting the standard of the Prince of Peace, amidst the enemies' camp; which standard, spangled with the seven stars in God's right hand, will there wave, unmolested, until all enemies are silenced, and God is all in all.

Brethren, we must love our enemies. Saith Jesus, "love your enemies," &c. "That ye may be the children of your father in heaven," &c. Math. v. 44, 45. So God loveth his enemies. This is the Universalist's God: let us worship and adore Him. If we copy and imitate the moral virtues of this only true God, (not a God who hates his enemies,) we shall thereby love all men. Brethren, permit us again to put you in mind of another declaration of Jesus, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Remember that our faith is made known by our works; that the tree is known by its fruit. Ye are Universalists in faith, be such in deed. The Universalist's faith is high as Heaven, great as immensity, and pure as holiness: of all people on earth, we should be holy in life and conversation. Let the unbeliever see, all that is needed to revolutionize the world from sin to holiness, is, God's real character to be known—all that is needed to destroy all party names, is, God's great purposes to know—and all that is needed to do away courts, penal laws, and executioners, is, the truth as it is in Jesus to know.

May peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, remain with us all, with all our brethren, the whole human family, until confirmed with us in life.

Done by order of the Association.

THEOPHILUS COTTON.

[\*Mr. Murray.]

[It is requested, that this Association be received into the fellowship of the general Convention and be taken under their patronage.]

From the (Watertown, N. Y.) Herald of Salvation.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD OF SALVATION.

New-Hartford, (N. Y.) Dec. 13, 1822.

DEAR SIR,—I transmit you a copy of the following letter, from a brother of the Abrahamic faith, and ministry,

in Glasgow, Scotland, with the hope that you will give it a place in the 'Herald.' It will show that *truth* will flourish in the most ungenial soil—will find its way to the heart in defiance of ecclesiastical restrictions or establishments, and will in due time, be known, admired and received, to the everlasting joy of all men, and the glory of God.

S. R. SMITH.

#### EXTRACT.

"Dear Sir—Having formerly written to Doct. Strong, and received no answer, I take the present opportunity of a friend's departure hence, to send you a few lines, expressive of the desire of a worshipping congregation here, professing belief in God's universal love, that a correspondence for mutual information, should be established with brethren on your side the Atlantic. There are three congregations of Universalists in this country—the one over which your humble correspondent has been called to preside, during the infirmity and debility of Mr. Douglas, the original pastor, consists of about 130 members, besides stated hearers; the other two, about 30 members each, besides hearers. Owing to the very sudden departure of the bearer of this, I have not time to write what I wish.—You must consider this therefore, as merely introductory, and we shall anxiously wait your answer, in which if you could favor us with some particulars respecting the late Mr. Elhanan Winchester, from the time he last landed in America, with the time, and manner of his decease; and also, with respect to his wife, whether she became, as we hear, truly a convert to Christ. The reason why I ask these particulars, is, because our brethren are desirous that Mr. W's life should be republished, and there remains a blank, during the period alluded to. We correspond regularly, with the remains of his congregation in London, but for want of a public speaker of talents and education, their numbers are greatly diminished. The desire for scriptural knowledge seems to be increasing amongst us, and we trust we have the blessing of the Lord of the harvest. We have heard that there are in America, several able ministers of the everlasting gospel; and that a Mr. Ballou of Boston, has, in his writings, done great justice to the doctrine of the restoration.—Were there any means of conveyance, we should be glad to be furnished with this publication, and Murray's sketches of sermons.—We shall be happy to be informed of the state of religion, and the progress of liberal opinions amongst you, and any particulars which you may consider interesting. And wishing you all prosperity in the diffusion of the gospel of the blessed God,"

"I am sir, your truly affectionate brother in the Lord,  
WILLIAM WORRALL.

"Glasgow, July 31, 1822.

"To Mr. Smith, New-Hartford, Oneida County, N. Y.

#### THE ANSWER.

New-Hartford, Oneida Co. N. Y. Dec. 12, 1822.

DEAR SIR—Your letter, dated July 31, of the present year, was duly received from the hand of its bearer; for which, I beg you will receive my grateful acknowledgements. A wish for the mutual interchange, not only of information, but of friendly and christian feeling, has ever been felt by those of the universal faith in this country, who were acquainted with the fact, that there were those of like "precious faith" in yours. But we knew of no person or name, whom we could address: nor indeed, of any place whither we could transmit our communication to a society, except London. By your goodness, all these inconveniences are superseded, and I avail myself of the privilege, of making an early reply to your letter.—Of the late Mr. E. Winchester's history, from the time to which you advert, or of the remains of his family, I can give you no particular information, as there is nothing like a regular account published; and he had finished his mortal labors and cares, before I entered upon the stage of action.

I trust, however, that the information desired, can be easily obtained from the brother, who ministers to the



Stock gathered by Mr. W. in the city of Hartford, Conn. at which place he died. I will endeavor to interest the brother alluded to, (the Rev. Richard Carrique,) to furnish you, at an early period, with every thing which can be collected on the subject. I apprehend no essential inconvenience, in the transmission of the works of Mr. Murray, and others which you express a wish to obtain. And here, I would observe, that the labours of Mr. Ballou have not been confined to a single publication. The work to which you allude, is no doubt "a treatise on untonement," the doctrinal soundness of which, will be more and more esteemed, as freedom of inquiry, and liberal sentiments prevail among men. His publications of a controversial nature are emphatic evidences of the immense superiority of the truth of the general system of Universalism, which he has advocated.—Others have published defences of the doctrine of the restoration, though none have written so voluminously. Besides the works above alluded to, we have at this time, *eight* periodical publications—*four* in New England, in as many different states—one in Philadelphia—and *three* in the state of New-York.—Several of these are published weekly—others semi-monthly—one monthly, and two quarterly: furnishing means of instruction, to those who by their distance from any place of worship, or other circumstances, are prevented from attendance on preaching—and indeed, giving to every class and denomination of readers an opportunity of judging for themselves. I think it may be safely estimated, that not less than *ten thousand* copies of these different papers, are subscribed for, and in constant circulation, in the United States—and there is no state, district or section of country, where they are not more or less known or read. Their effects are realized to be two-fold—they prevent the introduction and spread of partial and unworthy sentiments of God and his salvation; and they establish the knowledge of him who is "good unto all," and confirm the faith of the restitution of all things."

From the number of public papers devoted to the propagation of our sentiments, you will naturally infer, the number of believers must be respectable. We have in the fellowship of the "General Convention of Universalists," and its several branches or "associations," about *one hundred and twenty* preachers, several of whom are respectable for their scientific and literary attainments, and most of them men of good information and sound preaching talents—all of them "ready to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of *their* hope," and instrumental in the establishment of the truth of God. I am not in possession of any certain data, whence to estimate the number of separate societies, but think I may safely say, there are more than *two hundred* in the United State. In the state of New-York, there are at least *seventy*. The number of members is very different in different societies; some societies consisting of some hundreds, and others of not more than fifteen or twenty. The circumstances of these societies are extremely various, some having houses of public worship, others none—some stated and regular meetings, while others are destitute of a regular ministry, but most of them increasing in number and influence. Nor is the number of regular societies, the criterion of estimating the number of believers in the doctrine of universal purity and happiness. Many are *scattered abroad*, in single families, or under circumstances which absolutely forbid their personal fellowship with any congregation of believers; and still more perhaps, *secretly* enjoy our faith and hopes, who are *visibly* connected with other denominations of professing christians. From these brief particulars, you learn "the state of religion, and the progress of liberal opinions" amongst us in general, and will deduce them from the following fact in particular. In this section of New-York, where we now reckon more than *sixty* societies, there was not a single congregation or preacher, twenty years since.

Here I remark, that in my estimation *real* religion progresses in exactly the ratio, that *liberal* feelings and opinions are cherished. For the entire history of man, furnish-

es but a few distant and solitary instances of enlarged benevolence, and the daily practice of "pure religion and undefiled before God," where the mind and feelings were fettered by the restrictions of antichristian creeds governed by the senseless formalities of enthusiasm and superstition, or narrowed by *partial* views of a *partial* God. With us then, to have rational and liberal sentiments, is to have a more comprehensive moral sense—a more chastened and lively devotion to God—a more pure and expanded philanthropy, and a more circumspect regard to our words and actions. And thus, while our views and practices correspond, our *feelings* are alike distant from the apathy of indifference, and the phrenzied fervor of enthusiasm. I would by no means insinuate, that there are no examples of amiable virtue and piety among limitarians, or that Universalists are always what their sentiments naturally inspire; but that limited sentiments generally contract the affections, and tend to vitiate the morals, while on the contrary, liberal views conduce to moral improvement and virtue. Investigation here is *fearless*; for the period of religious spite, and the domination of an exclusive creed have past away. Hence the arrogance of *orthodoxy*, is often mortified with queries which it never answers, and its claims rejected because it furnishes not a *reason* for making them—and hence too, our numbers and influence are progressing, not with the rashness of passion, but with scripture proofs deduced by reason. Should you here enquire, whether with this general liberty of thought and discussion, Universalists perfectly agree in every peculiarity of doctrine—I answer no! They embrace a variety of sentiments mutually converging in the ultimate purity and felicity of all mankind. It is the single and exalted truth, which constitutes the criterion of fellowship—that *central* power, which by strong attraction draws a countless multitude with one consent, to the exercise of "one mind." With differently constituted minds, we think it quite enough to harmonize in the simple restoration of all men: and while we claim the right of private judgment, yield with full consent this prerogative of nature to all others, And I am fully persuaded, that stronger evidence of the dereliction of the spirit, and the power of Universalism, cannot be found, than in the assumption of exclusive truth in every particular of our faith.—Where the scriptures are read, and man has liberty to examine them—where liberal views can be taught; there the truth will prevail—there its "rest will be glorious." And every step is permanent in the enlargement of her empire—circle embracing circle, in the strong ligaments of divine love, the era must approximate when knowledge, life, and peace shall pour their united comforts on all mankind. When every barrier to the progress of intellect shall be broken down—when clerical usurpation shall no longer prevent or restrain research—when inquiry shall be chastened by judgment, and religion, opening a rich prospect of a happy immortality, shall instruct man to be happy now, by aiding him "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God."

Your letters, and those of other brethren, will not only be gratefully received, but considered means of instruction, and tokens of esteem; and should you be pleased to extend your correspondence in this country, I would refer you to the following brethren; Rev. *Russell Streeter*, Portland, Me.; Rev. *Paul Dean*, and Rev. *Hosea Ballou*, Boston, Mass.; Rev. *Richard Carrique*, Hartford, Conn.; Rev. *Edward Mitchell*, City of New-York, and Rev. *Abner Kneeland*, City of Philadelphia.

The expression of your christian affection, is most cordially reciprocated—and I pray you will present the assurance of my respect to Mr Douglas—I wish him and yourself, useful and happy lives, continued while life can yield enjoyment, and reviewed with the consolation, that "the pleasure of the Lord *has prospered* in your hands."

I am your brother in the Gospel of Christ,

STEPHEN R. SMITH.

MR. WILLIAM WORRALL, No. 102, Argyle-st. Glasgow.

## COMMUNICATIONS.

The following communication, from the pen of a young Lady residing in the State of N. Y.—was sent to us by a friend of her's, with a request that it should be published.

Editor.

FOR THE INQUIRER.

**THE GOODNESS OF GOD DEMONSTRATED BY  
THE WORKS OF NATURE.**

What can be better calculated to create pleasing emotions, or to silence the perturbation of the mind, than a view of the works of nature? all things in nature clearly evince the universal goodness, of an over-ruling Providence. It was on a pleasant day, in the latter part of July, my mind being o'er spread with a gloom of melancholy, which rendered me unfit for society; I sought relief by indulging in a solitary ramble. A lonely path which led to a sequestered wood, seemed most congenial to my feelings, and thither I hasted with speedy steps. At length, feeling somewhat fatigued by the distance I had walked, I reclined beneath the towering trees, whose summits seemed to wave amidst the few suspending clouds which were wafted through the firmament of Heaven. Here my mind was touched with all that solemnity, which the moral scene was calculated to create: no human voice to disturb my solitary thoughts; no sound except the warbling of the birds re-echoing through the distant wood; which added new solemnity to all around. The melody of the feathered choir, the rustling of the soft breeze which gently waved the sturdy oak, the binding branches of which shielded me from Sol's piercing rays. Though the 'orb of day,' had past his meridian splendor, and was fast descending in the western hemisphere, he still diffused his efficacious beams which gave new lustre to surrounding nature. All these objects, the whole scene around, conspired to raise my heart in gratitude to Him, who has thus kindly provided an infinite variety in the works of creation, calculated to enliven the feelings, inspire the mind, and fill the soul with devotion. This pleasing view, though it could not wholly disperse the clouds that hung o'er my mind, served in a great measure to lighten the gloom that dwelt thereon. It was in this solitary retreat my mind voluntarily fell into the following soliloquy. While gazing with rapture on the pleasing scenery presented to my view, I was ready to inquire within myself, can man, while allowed to participate the bounties of Heaven; view Him who is the source of all his happiness, as an unmerciful God? Can he view Him as a Being, who, ere this universe was called from its gloomy chaos, had designed that the far greater part of the children he was about to create, should be consigned to a place of never ending woe! Too horrible to contemplate; my mind recoiled at an idea so derogatory to the attributes of the Deity; so disparaging to the character of him, of whom it is said, he is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. Yet, too true I know it is, that this cruel doctrine of the partial goodness of God, is propagated in the world; and this too by men, distinguished for their learning and zeal. Contemplating the various doctrines for which men contend, that of eternal misery appeared the most cruel, and the most absurd thing, that human invention could contrive; it having a tendency to terrify the weak, and blind the understandings of the ignorant; and thereby induce many to subscribe to the doctrines and creeds of men, without investigating their propriety or the foundation on which they are built. Surely thought I, it must require feelings cold as the wintry blast, and a heart as hard as adamant, to believe; and at the same time realize, the extent of this cruel and unmerciful doctrine; without being sunk into the deepest despondency. Surely it must destroy every joy of social life, when friends behold their nearest connections, for whom they now feel the strongest ties of sympathetic love, what corroding cares

must intrude from an idea that they may ere long be doomed to the regions of interminable woe, where the least mitigation of pain is wholly impracticable! I appeal to the hearts of those that vindicate this doctrine, whether they can view the author of such misery with love and adoration! The voice of reason softly whispers in my ear, it is impossible, with the nature of man. Were we to assume the wings of imagination, and soar aloft to the regions of fiction, we should fail of portraying a character half so cruel, as that the advocates of interminable woe apply to the Father of mercies. If I attend the places frequented for the purpose of worshipping the God of Heaven, how often is my mind shocked by the heart chilling doctrine of endless misery! Eloquence may be displayed, but for what purpose? It is to represent the God of love, as infinitely more cruel than the vilest of men. It is with feelings, mingled with pity and astonishment, that I behold men, professing to be followers of their Lord and master, labouring with so much assiduity, in propagating sentiments which eclipse the perfections of the Deity, by limiting his goodness and confining his mercies to a select and chosen few. Frequently have I been led to contrast the doctrines of the present day with that Gospel the Angels proclaimed to the Shepherds, which was good news, and glad tidings of great joy, which should be unto all people. Here were no unmerciful anathemas pronounced; no thunderbolts of fiery indignation hurled to fill the mind with terrific fear, nor sheets of liquid flames to give a finish to the picture of Almighty wrath. Christ in language calculated to penetrate the most obdurate heart, and melt the stubborn sinner into deep contrition for his crimes, invites all those that are weary and heavy laden to come unto him and he will give them rest. He says take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls: for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. O that men would be constrained through love, to worship their Creator; and worship Him as a Being good unto all his children without partiality, and without hypocrisy; firmly relying in that which he hath promised, that in the dispensations of the fullness of times he will gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on the earth, even in Him.

FOR THE INQUIRER,

**THE MORALITY OF THE GOSPEL; OR  
THE IMMORAL TENDENCY OF CALVINISM.  
NO. 5.**

We cannot yet dismiss the subject, of the jealous, vindictive and revengeful character of God as represented by calvinism, as the opinions entertained respecting the attributes of the Deity constitute the basis of every religion, not only as it respects its dogmas but as to its spirit and moral character. It cannot require any reasons to shew, that religion which represents God as arbitrary, capricious and vindictive, as cruel and relentless, must excite an intolerant and persecuting spirit, in all who sincerely believe in it; and if it also represents him as unjust and unmerciful, as making an arbitrary preference among his creatures, and foreordaining, millions of years before they came into existence, the happiness of some, and the misery of others, without any regard to their merits or demerits, as punishing those who offend against his laws without end, and with inconceivable severity, so that there is no agreement between the crime and the punishment, and in fine as having created millions of beings for no other purpose than to make them miserable thereby to promote his own glory and the happiness of his favourites, it must so far as its influence is felt, destroy all rational ideas of justice, clemency and humanity. The adherents of a God who is represented as partial and unjust, or of punishing a part of his creatures who in no respect are more sinful than others, who are not punished, and of inflicting an infinite punishment for a finite offence, must naturally be as unjust as the God they adore. Can it be surprising that the servants of



jealous and vindictive God, should conceive it their duty to enter into his quarrels and avenge his injuries, or that the worshippers of a God of cruelty, should have caused the earth to echo with groans and float in blood. That it may not be said we misrepresent the sentiments of calvinists, we will subjoin an extract or two from their most distinguished writers. Calvin says in his Institutes in attempting to refute the objections made to his favourite doctrine of election: "The reprobate wish to be thought excusable in sinning because they cannot avoid the necessity of sinning; especially since this necessity is laid upon them by the ordinance of God; but we deny this to be a just excuse, because the ordinance of God by which they complain that they are destined to destruction, is guided by equity, unknown indeed to us, but indubitably certain." Such were the ideas of the justice of God entertained by the founder of Calvinism. The only ground upon which he attempts to prove the justice of the punishment of those "who have been destined by the ordinance of God to destruction," is, by asserting that his ordinance is guided by equity, which is unknown to us. But upon what authority does he assert that this ordinance of God is guided by equity, when he admits that the equity of it is "unknown." The ordinance itself imports the most manifest inequity. There can be no ground for the assertion that it is equitable unless it is that God cannot be chargeable with injustice; and if so, this argument proves that there can be no such ordinance. But Calvin wished to support the ordinance, and to maintain the justice of God, which he can only do by having recourse to mystery and contending that the "equity of God is unknown to us," but perfectly consistent with the punishment of his creatures for sins committed by a "necessity laid upon them by his own ordinance." We will give another specimen of the sentiments of Calvinists as to the justice and mercy of God. Edwards in his sermon on hell torments, informs us "that the sight of hell torments will exalt the happiness of the saints forever. It will not only make them more sensible of the greatness and freeness of the grace of God in their happiness; but it will really make their happiness the greater, as it will make them more sensible of their own happiness; it will give them a more lively relish of it; it will make them prize it more. When they see others who were of the same nature and born under the same circumstances, and they so distinguished, oh! it will make them sensible how happy they are. A sense of the opposite misery in all cases greatly increases the relish of any joy or pleasure."

Who can peruse without horror such sentiments of the God of infinite mercies? It cannot be doubted that such sentiments as these have driven thousands into infidelity. If this is christianity, and such is the justice and mercy of the christian's God, the following observations of a sceptic must be admitted to be perfectly just: "According to this tyrannic system of dogmas, the God of mercies has destined the greatest part of mankind to eternal torments. He places them in this world that by the abuse of their faculties and liberty they may render themselves worthy of the implacable wrath of their Creator. A benevolent and merciful God gives to mankind a free will of which he knows they will make so perverse a use as to merit eternal damnation. Thus instead of punishing them with the propensities necessary to their happiness he permits them to act only that he may have the pleasure of plunging them into hell. Nothing can be more horrible than the descriptions given us by christians [Calvinists] of this place destined to be the future residence of almost all mankind. There a merciful God will, throughout an eternity, bath himself in the tears of wretches whom he created for misery. Sinners shut up in this awful dungeon will be delivered up to devouring flames. There shall be heard weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. The torments of this place shall at the end of millions of years have only begun. The consoling hope of a distant mitigation of pain shall be unknown. In one word God by an act of omnipotence shall render man capable of misery uninterrupted and interminable. His jus-

tice will punish finite crimes the effects of which are limited by time, by torments infinite in degree and duration. Such is the idea a christian [Calvinist &c.] forms of the God that demands his love. This tyrant creates him only to render him miserable; he gives him reason to deceive him, and propensities to lead him astray. He gives him liberty to effect his own ruin. He gives him advantages above the beasts that he may be subjected to torments which beasts like inanimate substances are incapable of suffering. The dogma of predestination represents the lot of man as worse than that of brutes and stones."

This picture, vivid as it is, is not overwrought when applied to calvinism. Such is the calvinist's God, characterized by caprice, partiality, injustice, implacable cruelty and vindictiveness. He is only an infinite tyrant; for if you add infinity to the character of the greatest tyrant that ever disgraced the earth, it will afford the most perfect and striking idea of God, as exhibited in the calvinistic system. Need we ask what must be the moral effect of such a religion? We have no occasion to reason upon this subject, as it does not depend upon any arguments *a-priori*; experience is always a safer reliance than speculation, and facts than arguments however conclusive. The history of the Catholic Church and of the Calvinistic religion, during more than two centuries, is stained with blood and disgraced with crimes. It is a history of wars, civil commotions, factions, cabals, tyranny, intolerance and persecution, frauds, treachery, injustice, violence, assassinations and bloodshed. During this long period of mental and moral darkness the earth was filled with violence, and inundated with crimes. Morals were perverted, the principles of right and wrong were changed and the most flagitious crimes were dignified with the name of virtue. Faith and zeal comprised the sum total of piety and morality, and those who signalized themselves most in persecuting the opposers of the true faith, were the greatest saints. The cross like the crescent formed the banner of war, to fight the battles of their God, to overcome all opposition, and propagate the gospel with the sword.

From whence came this spirit of violence and all the bitter fruits which it produced? Was it from a religion which teaches us to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us and despitefully use us, to resist not evil, but to overcome evil with good?—a religion which was to bring peace on earth and good will to men? No two things can be conceived of, more opposite, than the spirit of christianity and the spirit of catholicism and calvinism during the period of which we are speaking. If this spirit of violence and persecution could not have proceeded from christianity, from whence did it originate? We answer, from the false and absurd dogmas of the church, and principally from the character and attributes which were given to the Supreme Being. Although in the scriptures he is represented as a God of love, and we are told that he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him; yet in the dogmas of orthodoxy he was represented as a God of wrath, whose anger was like a consuming fire which burned forever. He was exhibited as implacable, vindictive and relentless, and as punishing those who offended him with never ending torments; as having prepared a dungeon horrible beyond conception, into which they were to be cast, and during a never ending eternity his glory and happiness was to be promoted, by the never-ceasing groans and agonies of these miserable subjects of his wrath.

Can it be surprising that the devotees of such a religion and the worshippers of such a God, should have been themselves under the dominion of the most violent and vindictive passions? that they should have been persecuting, cruel and sanguinary, and have attempted to put down all opposition, to what they considered the true faith by the sword? that they should have burnt heretics that they might have a foretaste here of the torments which awaited them hereafter? or that they should have considered this as the most acceptable service to God, as it was natural to

regard their conduct as highly meritorious, being volunteers in the service of God and the unfeeling executioners of his vengeance? Why should not a God of wrath and vindictiveness, who has created a large proportion of his creatures for the express purpose of making them miserable, and whose glory and happiness are to be promoted during the endless ages of eternity by the torments and agonies of the damned, be pleased with his faithful servants for commencing this work of punishment on earth?

Such have been the bitter fruits and the dreadful consequences of a religion, the prominent feature of which, consisted of the belief in a vindictive and angry God and a system of hell torments. That calvinism has been somewhat modified is admitted, yet its character and spirit are essentially the same; they are not changed in principle but only in degree. Calvinism at the present day differs from that of the two first centuries, as war among civilized nations does from that which was carried on among barbarians. In both cases there is the spirit and evils of war, but in the latter this spirit is more ferocious and sanguinary. The spirit of the gospel is peace, love and benevolence; the spirit of calvinism is intollerant, unchangeable and implacable. As we attempted to show in our last, the religion of the gospel consists of love in the heart towards God and our fellow creatures. To love God is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, namely, that we love our neighbour as ourselves. But is calvinism calculated to inspire a spirit of love either to God or our fellow creatures? Can a God who is exhibited as an arbitrary and cruel tyrant, "who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy;" who delights in the misery of his own offspring, and hath brought them into existence for the sole purpose of punishing them, be the subject of our love? Do not calvinists deceive themselves when they talk about their love to God? And how can they love their fellow creatures? Can they love those whom God hates, whom he has reprobated, whom he created vessels of wrath, and whom by his ordinance he hath "destined to destruction?" Can they have more love and mercy than their God, and wish for the happiness of those whom he is determined to punish, and that too not for their sins, but to promote his own glory?

#### FOR THE INQUIRER.

*Mr. Editor,*—If in your opinion the following extract from the Rev. J. Murray's life may be of use in the Inquirer, please to insert it and oblige,

B. W \*\*\*\*\*

Mr. Murray when in England, and before he had embraced Universalism, being in some repute in Mr. Whitfield's congregation, was chosen with one or two more, for the purpose of reclaiming a certain woman who had become an Universalist.

Mr. Murray represented the young Lady as very respectable, but was supposed to be awfully deluded by hearing Mr. Kelly, a Universalist Preacher. Mr. M. further says "The young Lady received us with much condescension and kindness, after the first ceremonies, we sat for some time silent; and at length I drew a heavy sigh, and uttered a pathetic sentiment respecting the deplorable condition of those who live and die in unbelief, and concluded with a violent declamation by pronouncing with great earnestness, "he that believeth not shall be damned." "And pray sir," said the Lady with great sweetness, "what is the unbeliever damned for not believing?"

*Murray.* "What is he damned for not believing? Why he is damned for not believing."

*Lady.* "But sir, I asked what was that which he did not believe, for which he is damned?"

*Murray.* "Why for not believing in Jesus Christ to be sure."

*Lady.* "Do you mean to say that unbelievers are dam-

ned for not believing there was such a person as Jesus Christ?"

*Murray.* "I do not, a man may believe there was such a person as Jesus Christ, and yet be damned."

*Lady.* "What then sir, must a man believe in order to avoid damnation?"

*Murray.* "Why he must believe that Christ is a complete Saviour."

*Lady.* "Suppose he were to believe that Jesus Christ is a complete Saviour of others, would that belief save him?"

*Murray.* "No, he must believe that Jesus Christ is his complete Saviour; every individual must believe for himself, that Jesus Christ is his complete Saviour."

*Lady.* "Why sir, is Jesus Christ the Saviour of any unbelievers?"

*Murray.* "No, Madam."

*Lady.* "Then why should any unbeliever believe that Jesus Christ is his Saviour, until he is his Saviour?"

*Murray.* "I say he is not the Saviour of any one until he believes."

*Lady.* "Then if Christ be not the Saviour of the unbeliever until he believes, the unbeliever is called upon to believe a lie? It appears to me sir, that Jesus is a complete Saviour of unbelievers, and unbelievers are called on to believe the truth, and by believing they are saved, in their own apprehension; saved from all those dreadful fears which are consequent on unbelief, and conscious damnation."

*Murray.* "No Madam, you are dreadfully, I trust, not fatally misled. Jesus never is and never was the Saviour of any unbeliever, and he never will be."

*Lady.* "Do you think he is your Saviour sir?"

*Murray.* "I hope he is."

*Lady.* "Were you always a believer sir?"

*Murray.* "No Madam."

*Lady.* "Then you were once an unbeliever, that is, you once believed that Christ was not your Saviour. Now, as you say he never was and never will be the Saviour of any unbeliever, as you were once an unbeliever, he never can be your Saviour."

*Murray.* "He never was my Saviour until I believed."

*Lady.* "Did he not die for you, before you believed?"

Here, says Mr. Murray I was extremely embarrassed and wished myself out of her habitation.

#### FOR THE INQUIRER.

*Mr. Editor,*—In the Springfield Liberal Recorder of the 15th inst. I found an extract from the writings of Lord Bacon, in which he gives a definition of a Trinitarian's creed. As your paper is designed to invite free inquiry, and an investigation of truth, I have no apology to make for requesting you to publish the extract, being persuaded that you will firmly adhere to the principles on which the "Inquirer" was promised to be conducted. It would be highly gratifying to me, (if Lord Bacon is incorrect in his definition of a Trinitarian's Creed,) if some learned Trinitarian, well skilled in this great MYSTERY, would avail himself of the opportunity of showing the impropriety of his Lordship's remarks, and exonerate his creed from those absurdities attached to it in the extract. Yours

M.

*Lord Bacon's definition of a Trinitarian's Creed.*—"He believes three to be one, and one to be three; a father not to be older than his son; a son to be equal with his father; and one proceeding from both; he believes three persons in one nature, and two natures in one person.

"He believes a virgin to be the mother of a son; and that very son of hers, to be her maker. He believes him



to have been shut up, in a narrow room, whom heaven and earth could not contain. He believes *him* to have been born in time, who was and is from everlasting. He believes *him* to have been a weak child, and carried in arms, who is the Almighty; and *him* once to have died, who only has life and immortality **IN HIMSELF**.

## RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

SATURDAY, January 25, 1823.

## PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

(Continued, from page 31.)

Having in our fourth number, shown the absurdities and inconsistency attending the common mode of explaining the parable under consideration, which to us affords sufficient reason for rejecting it, we now proceed to notice other modes of explanation which to us are equally objectionable.

The parable has been understood in the following manner.—**FIRST**. The “field,” or “world,” mankind, or rather, man. **SECONDLY**, The “good seed”—the soul or spirit, or a good and holy principle infused into man at his formation. **THIRDLY**. The “tares” evil propensities sown in the heart by the wiles and deceptions of the Devil. **FOURTHLY**. The harvest the end of the world, that is, at death the wheat the good principle, or the spirit is received to heaven; while the “tares,” the evil propensities of the heart die, being extinguished in the dissolution of the body.

In the illustration of the parable before us, there are certain things to be kept in view as distinct and separate ideas. 1st. The field. 2d. The seed. The smallest intellectual capacity will be able to discover these to be perfectly distinct things, and that the “field” must have existed before the seed could be sown in it; and that what ever properties there may be in the earth, to cause the seed to swell and bring forth, still the field, and the seed are two separate things. This being admitted, the above explanation is attended with difficulties both philosophically and according to scripture.

In conformity to the supposition we are noticing; we must consider the body of man, when first formed, as the *field*. This question then arises, are we to consider the breath of life breathed into man; by which he became a living soul, as the good seed sown by the son of man? Should this be admitted, we are next led to the enquiry whether man, existing as a living soul, was not subject to certain passions and propensities, that might be operated upon by external objects, previous to the attempts of the deceiver to lead man from his duty to his Creator. According to the hypothesis that the evil propensities of the heart are the tares sown by the Devil, man must have been perfectly holy, with nothing in his constitution or system, but what was pure and good, and from which no evil could possibly arise, until the germ or evil seed, should be implanted, or sown in this field, and grow up with the springing wheat, and thus continue through all the periods of life, a source of perplexity and trouble to its possessor.

The scriptures inform us, that the creature (Man) was made subject to vanity.—James, speaking of the origin of Sin, says “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Man therefore, in his earthly constitution, must have possessed the germ or seeds of passion or lust, which were capable of conceiving and bringing forth sin; and there was no need of the enemy sowing **TARES**, before evil propensities could arise in the heart.

In the illustration before us, there is not that distinction

preserved between the “field,” and the “seed,” which is requisite; especially with respect to the “tares,” as our lusts and passions arise from the particular arrangement of the animal system. Consequently, we confound these ideas, and blend them together, as we find the tares in embryo in the field as it comes out of the hand of him that formed it. The explanation is, therefore, not according to the declaration of the Saviour, nor consistent with the parable itself.

There are several other things equally inconsistent, that might be pointed out in this exposition of the parable; but it will be unnecessary to notice them further. We will detain our readers to notice but one more opinion on the subject under consideration, which is, that by “**WHEAT**” and “**TARES**,” Jews and Gentiles are meant,—the Jews being tares—the Gentiles, wheat.—The harvest, the end of the age, or Jewish dispensation. By the wheat being gathered into the garner, the gathering of the gentiles into the system or dispensation of the Gospel. The binding together in bundles the “tares” to burn,—the collecting of the Jews in several cities, where thousands and tens of thousands of them being surrounded by their enemies, miserably perished.

This last illustration is something plausible, and much may be said in favor of it, especially when we consider that most of the parables spoken by Christ, had reference to the change of dispensations about to take place; and the consequences resulting to Jew and Gentile from that change. Yet we are not fully satisfied with it, as we know not how to reconcile certain parts of the parable with this explanation. For instance, what shall we understand by the “world?” If this earth is meant as the field, we shall fall into the same difficulties noticed in our fourth number. If by good seed is meant Gentiles sowed by the Son of Man. The question occurs, did the Son of man make those Gentiles or introduce them into existence, but did not the Jews? And lastly, are the “Tares” the “Jews” sown by the Devil? Not admitting the Devil to possess creative power, we are at a loss to make this part of the parable meet the views of the believers in this hypothesis. We are well aware, and are ready to acknowledge, that it is difficult to illustrate a parable so as to be able to explain every part of it in a manner that shall be perfectly satisfactory. There may be many trifling things mentioned necessary in relating, or making the relation, yet not necessary in the illustration. If then the prominent ideas intended to be communicated by the speaker, can be obtained it is as much as we in general can expect—and with this we ought to be contented, without seeking after a perfect understanding of every minute expression in the parable.

We consider the “field” the “wheat” and the “tares”—together with the persons by whom the seed is sown, as prominent ideas—or leading features in this parable. Having then laid before our readers the several opinions on this subject, that are embraced and received in the world; and our reasons for rejecting them. We will in the next number, endeavor to explain the parable, in the humble hope that the mind of the reader will be prepared for a calm and dispassionate discussion of the subject.

## A DIALOGUE.

Some years ago, during a religious revival in the Town of — in Vermont, a Mr. —, an Universalist preacher, riding through the place, was overtaken by a Doctor Mac, who was a deacon of a Calvinist Church; when the following conversation was commenced by the Doctor.

Dr. Good News Sir, I have glorious news to tell you.

Mr. Ah! indeed Dr. and what is the news?

Dr. Why Sir, the **LORD** is in — working wonders by his spirit. There is a great revival, and many souls are daily converted.

Mr. I am glad of it Dr. for I know of no place where a reformation was more needed. But Dr. there is one thing which is a matter of some surprise with me. It is this

Many of those converts come forward, relate an experience, and you receive their word for the genuineness of their relation, when in temporal concerns you would not take their word, or trust them the value of six cents.

Dr. I know it, but I think we have sufficient evidence that it is the work of God. It will do to take them into the church.

Mr. Well Dr. time will determine the matter. You recollect the reformation in the towns of — and —; and you know what has been the result. As soon as the revival died away, they began to examine into each others character, and the genuineness of their experience. Quarrels ensued, and after numberless church meetings, and excommunicating a large proportion of those whom they had received during the revival, they were able once more to enjoy peace; and twelve months hence, you and I can determine better as to this revival.

Dr. Ah Sir, it is unfortunately the case, that there are always some who prove hypocrites.

Mr. But Dr. it surely is not the work of the LORD to make men hypocrites?

Dr. Oh no, by no means, but it is always the case, that when the Lord begins a good work among men, the Devil will always set himself to work at the same time and place.

Mr. Well Dr. but as the hypocrite whom you say is worked upon by the Devil, relates an experience similar to those who are converted by the spirit of God, and with the same apparent sincerity, is it not a little singular, that God and the Devil should work so exactly alike, producing the same feelings of conviction and conversion, that you old experienced saints that have been serving God, and walking in the way of holiness for twenty years or more, nay, that your ministers who profess to know so much of the spirit of God in all its operations, are not able to distinguish which is the work of God, and which is not, but as cordially receive him who is operated upon by the spirit of the Devil, as him who is converted by the spirit of God, and time alone trying the character enables you to find the hypocrite? Would it not then be well Dr. for you to wait awhile, as you cannot determine by the relation, the exercises of a person's mind, that you may discover the genuine convert from the hypocrite?

Dr. I don't know but it might be well enough, but we think it best to bring them at once into the church.

Mr. Dr. how many hypocrites do you think there will prove to be in —?

Dr. I do not know. It is not for me to say, but it is probable there will be some.

Mr. Perhaps Dr. there may be twenty?

Dr. Oh yes. It would be remarkable if there were not as much as twenty among such a number.

Mr. Perhaps there may be forty, fifty, or even one half?

Dr. Why there may be, but I hope for better things, I cannot believe there will be so many hypocrites as one half.

Mr. You admit there may be as many as half, and for aught you know, more?

Dr. Yes there may be, but I do not believe there will.

Mr. Now Dr. you have called this revival the work of God, might I not with as much propriety say, it is the work of the Devil?

Dr. You may call it so if you please, but I should not dare to say so for the world.

Mr. But Dr. you acknowledge that some will prove to be hypocrites. That it is the work of the Devil to make men hypocrites. One half or even more may prove hypocrites. The work is so exactly similar that you are not able to distinguish. Now Dr. according to your own acknowledgment, have you any more evidence to prove this

revival is the work of God, than that it is the work of the Devil?

Dr. You may say what you please about it, but I say it is the work of God.

The Doctor attended conference in the evening, spouted away about the wickedness of Universalists, and said, he that day had fallen into company with a Universalist preacher, to whom, he undertook to relate the glorious work the Lord was carrying on in the town, but that he laughed at him, and said it was all the work of the Devil.

### ANOTHER CHURCH.

We announce, with much satisfaction, for the information of our friends in distant towns, that a *Second Society* is formed in this city, and ground purchased for the erection of another church, on the corner of Prince and Orange streets. It is contemplated to build a church, 60 by 70 feet, with a basement story of eight feet six inches, to be five feet above the ground, for a School, &c. The site for the building is excellent, being the highest ground in the city, and will admit of windows on all sides of the building. The house, when erected, will be bounded as follows: Fronting south, on Prince-street; west, on Orange-street; north, by rear of the lot, 25 feet; east, by surplus of the lot, 15 feet. The ground measuring 75 feet on Prince-st, and 100 on Orange-street.

N. Y. Gospel Herald.

From the Universalist Magazine.

### THE SEASONS.

#### Emblem of Human Life.

I have seen the green-budding Spring,  
The scenes of my hope it illum'd;  
I've seen the gay Summer's bright beams,  
On its stay I fondly presum'd.

I have seen Yellow Autumn's rich stores;  
I hop'd its delights would abide;  
And winter's chill blast I have heard  
The spoils of the groves spreading wide.

Since then Spring, the parent of joys,  
Is follow'd by winter's bleak wind,  
Ah! why should I foster the hope,  
Perpetual pleasures to find.

But despair not, for winter's harsh storms  
Are the nurse of the hopes of the Spring;  
Both the smiles of the Summer's bright days,  
And Autumn's rich treasures they bring.

So the stern Winter's day of our life,  
And the tempest that over us rove,  
Shall yield to the durable smiles  
Of Spring ever blooming above.

### NOTICE.

The Agents for the INQUIRER will confer a favor on the publishers, by collecting and remitting the sums due for the SECOND Volume.

### NOTICE.

REV. R. CARRIQUE, will preach the FIRST and THIRD Sunday in each month in this City, on the SECOND in Poquonack,—and in Southington on the FOURTH.

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